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**Report 00.533**

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Report to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee  
from Wayne O'Donnell, Manager, Biosecurity

## **Bovine Tb Programme 2000/01**

### **1. Purpose**

To advise Council of the Animal Health Board's confirmed funding for the Bovine Tb vector control programme for 2000/01 and to outline the implications for the Council's approved budget.

### **2. Background**

During the process of developing the draft 2000/01 Bovine Tb vector control budget, the Council gave clear indications that they wished to pursue an increased programme to make further inroads into Bovine reactor numbers. Council staff identified three new operations for approval by the Animal Health Board –

- ◆ North Wairarapa Eradication Zone
- ◆ Ruamahanga River
- ◆ Tora – Tukurumuri

The Animal Health Board also requested that we consider an Otaki ferret operation following herd breakdowns in the coastal Otaki area.

The Council's approved budget for 2000/01 included the Council's share of funding for all four of these operations. However the documentation associated with the Annual Plan and Long Term Financial Strategy made it clear that implementation of any new operations was dependent upon matching funding from the Animal Health Board.

The Animal Health Board acknowledged the desire of several councils for an increase in activity by seeking approximately \$5M additional funding from the Crown. This increase was sought to allow a number of new operations, particularly where there were major Tb breakdowns occurring in Tasman District and the East Taupo area.

The Crown announced its Bovine Tb funding share in the 15 June budget. An additional total of \$3.5M has been provided to the Animal Health Board for the current year. As this was less than the requested total, the Animal Health Board has been forced to prioritise the proposed expansionary programme. Additional expenditure has been targeted in those areas where the risk of spread is considered greatest. The East Taupo operation, in particular, is critical as the clear areas of Bay of Plenty, Gisborne and Hawkes Bay are at risk.

### 3. Amended WRC Programme

The Animal Health Board has now confirmed that three of the four operations proposed for the Wellington Region will receive funding. The remaining proposal, Tora – Tukurumuri, will be delayed for consideration in 2001/02.

It is unfortunate that our intended expansion into south-east Wairarapa has been thwarted. At 39,700 hectares, the Tora – Tukurumuri operation offered an opportunity to have a major impact on the residual Tb problem in that area and was eagerly awaited by property holders in the area.

However, it is pleasing to see the approval for the North Wairarapa Eradication Zone as this will receive 75% funding from the Animal Health Board instead of the current 50%.

All non-approved operations will now be re-considered by the Animal Health Board during the review of the next National Bovine Tb Pest Management Strategy, scheduled for commencement in July 2001. The Committee will be aware that the next Strategy proposes significant amendments to the current funding apportionments. If these changes eventuate, then this Council's future funding is predicted to decrease.

### 4. Funding Implications

The approved 2000/01 Bovine Tb vector control budget includes provision for all four proposed operations. The financial impacts of losing the Tora – Tukurumuri operation and other adjustments are set out below –

<u>WRC funding share</u> (Budget)	<u>WRC funding share</u> (Revised)	<u>Variance</u>
\$1,808,000	\$1,450,800	(\$357,200)

Specific implications for the general and Bovine Tb rates funding are as follows –

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Revised</u>	<u>Variance</u>
General	\$1,056,400	\$870,500	(\$185,500)
Bovine Tb	\$703,000	\$580,350	(\$122,650)

The Committee should note that there will be a reduction in the Bovine Tb rates collected amounting to approximately \$33,700, following the deferment of the Tora – Tukurumuri operation. This occurs as the Tora – Tukurumuri area will now be rated at the non-operational rate.

The reduced funding now required from the Bovine Tb rate means that the forecasted variance (\$122,650) is similar to the total that was to have been funded from the Bovine Tb Rate Reserve. Therefore, very little use of the Reserve Fund is anticipated for 2000/01. Any minor year-end variations will, however, be able to be handled by transfer to or from the Reserve.

## **5. Communication**

The deferment of the Tora – Tukurumuri operation has funding and management implications for the landowners in the area. It would therefore be appropriate to advise them individually of the reasons for the deferment.

It would also be appropriate to issue a media release outlining the new 2000/01 Bovine Tb vector control programme, particularly the approval of the Eradication Zone. This Eradication Zone is the first step in achieving a 'Tb free' area in the Wellington Region.

## **6. Recommendation**

*That the Committee recommends that Council notes:*

- (1) *The confirmed Animal Health Board's position for the 2000/01 Bovine Tb programme in the Wellington Region.*
- (2) *The non-inclusion of the Tora – Tukurumuri operation in the 2000/01 year and the approval of the North Wairarapa Eradication Zone.*
- (3) *The forecasted variations from the approved budget as a result of these changes.*

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